

Abstract

A method and apparatus is disclosed for providing an integrated communication services (ICS) network that permits wireless and wireline data subscribers to share information on a hospital campus using wireless or wireline local area networks, or to seamlessly tap into the facility's central database while in transit away from the hospital.

- 5 Users interface with the ICS network through the use of a point of care terminal that resembles a clipboard and accepts data entry from a stylus on an touch screen. The central database, referred to as the integrated communications clearinghouse (ICC) is adapted to store a communication profile for every network server on the ICS network. The ICC also maintains a Global Patient Profile (GPP), consisting of a patient profile for every patient
- 10 ever added to the network. The GPP provides the ICC with the capability of providing aggregated data and demographic information (with or without patient identification), creating "live" public health statistics through a single query to a central server. To access the ICS, a user at a point of care terminal can utilize several paths in order to deliver data to its destination. This may include existing off-the-shelf PCMCIA based
- 15 peripherals such as: wireless LANS, standard wired Ethernet LAN, a land line Modem, or wireless wide area networks. The wireless wide area networks may also include several data paths such as a circuit switched cellular, or packet based Cellular Digital Packet Data (CDPD). The actual selection of a particular channel will be service-dependent and a function
- 20 of the user whereabouts, the desired quality of the connection, and the costs of the connection.